

Se Habla Español: Strategy and Implementation for Bilingual Resources at Museums

Presented by Maria del Carmen Barrios-Giordana on October 2, 2019

Key Themes

The Hispanic population in the U.S. is growing quickly. Offering Spanish language resources in your museum can help this community feel welcome and included.

Maria del Carmen Barrios-Giordana explores the importance of bilingual interpretation and offers considerations for incorporating bilingual resources in museums form choosing which interpretive and didactic materials to translate to understanding the intricacies of the Spanish language.

Examples

The Minneapolis Institute of Art has bilingual translations in their galleries and they offer visitor information in English, Spanish, Somali, and Hmong.

The Phoenix Art Museum's website is available in both English and Spanish, and they are planning to make their entire museum bilingual.

The El Paso Holocaust Museum is the only fully bilingual Holocaust museum in the United States.

Resources

Send Maria del Carmen Barrios-Giordana an email.

Antena Aire is an organization dedicated to language justice, the inclusion of people who speak English as a second language. For more information on creating welcoming bilingual spaces they have a helpful resource list.

In "In Other Words: Developing Bilingual Exhibitions," Carlos Plasa offers helpful strategies for bilingual interpretation.

The Pew Research Center offers data and blog posts about the Hispanic population in the U.S.

Freelancer is a website that allows you to search for translators in your area.

Helpful Tips

Directly asking visitors if they would like a Spanish language resource can make them feel othered and unwelcome. A more inviting approach is to make a general statement about your available resources that allows visitors to self-select what works best for them.

Translating everything in the museum can be time consuming and expensive. Be strategic with the resources you chose to translate and think about what will have maximum impact on the audience.

Spanish is not spoken the same way in each community. Pick a specific Spanish language variant and dictionary to use for translations throughout your museum.